NOTES ON MILITARY MAP READING.

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(Continued from p. 565.)

CONVENTIONAL SIGNS AND LETTERING.

Before proceeding further with the study of map-reading, the student should thoroughly acquaint himself with the various conventional signs employed in maps and field sketches. It is not considered necessary to reproduce them here, as the more important of them are shown in the margins of most Ordnance and manoeuvre maps, and everyone who takes up the subject of map-reading should obtain a map of some district which is easily accessible to him, so as to be in a position to supplement theoretical study by practical application. A sheet of the 1-inch Ordnance map will be found to be convenient for this purpose. The conventional signs and lettering used in field sketching are fully illustrated in Plate 9 of the “Field Service Pocket Book.”

Woods.—It will be noticed in an Ordnance map that deciduous and coniferous trees are represented by miniature drawings of either class of tree. A fir-wood has consequently a more “spikey” appearance than one composed of other trees. Woods should generally be taken to be impassable for wheeled traffic if no definite tracks are shown through them. Fir-woods nearly always have tracks, and it is usually possible to get vehicles through them if care is exercised. In coloured maps, woods are tinted green.

Park Land.—Areas on the map representing park land are stippled, and consequently look darker than the surrounding country or than woods. Parks usually make excellent camping grounds, and in most cases are attached to commodious houses, which, if available, would be eminently suitable for the headquarters of a force, or for adaptation to the requirements of a large stationary hospital.

Orchards can be distinguished by the miniature drawings of deciduous trees being arranged in parallel rows at regular intervals.

Roads.—There are four classes of roads figured on Ordnance maps and their conventional representations should be carefully studied.

(1) First-class Roads.—Main roads from town to town, which have 14 feet or upwards of metalling. They have no gradient over
1 in 30, and afford space throughout their length for a double line of wagons, one line passing the other. Represented by two parallel thick lines.

(2) Second-class Roads.—Country roads from town to town, or village to village. Have under 14 feet of metalling; in good repair. These are usually excellent roads and suitable for any kind of traffic. Represented by two parallel lines, one thick and the other thin.

(3) Third-class Roads.—Country roads. Under 14 feet of metalling; in bad repair. Represented by two parallel fine lines.

(4) Fourth-class Roads.—Unmetalled cart tracks. Represented by two parallel fine lines, so close together as to appear, at first sight, almost like a single line.

In coloured Ordnance maps first and second class roads are tinted brown.

Where roads are unfenced, that is to say, where they are bounded by no obstacle which would prevent wheeled traffic from being turned off them, they are represented as being enclosed by dotted, not continuous, lines.

For cavalry marching in files (two abreast), wagons in single line, or infantry in four, the minimum width of roadway necessary is 10 feet.

Footpaths are represented by single fine broken lines. County boundaries are shown in the same way, but lines are thicker and more distinct.

Railways.—The conventional representation of railways should be observed, and the methods of showing whether there are two or more lines should be distinguished. The signs employed to indicate bridges, level crossings, cuttings, embankments, tunnels, and viaducts, should also be noted.

Streams, rivers, and canals, if under 15 feet in width, are shown in Ordnance maps as a single line. Wider streams are shown as double lines with shading between.

The representation of bridges, fords and ferries is shown in the diagram.

Ford.—The following depths are fordable:

For infantry, 3 feet.
For cavalry, 4 feet.
Wagons containing ammunition, 2 feet 4 inches.

"Gravelly bottoms are best, sandy bottoms are bad, as the sand gets stirred up and the depth of the water thus increases."

"Fords should be clearly marked by long pickets driven into the river-bed above and below the ford, their heads being connected by
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a strong rope. It is as well to mark the pickets in order that any rise of the water may be at once evident." "The depth of the river is generally most uniform in straight parts; at bends the depth will generally be greater at the concave bank and less at the convex." "For this reason a river which is not anywhere fordable straight across may be found passable in a slanting direction between two bends; other means of passing a gap are flying bridges and ferries." ("Field Service Pocket Book," p. 124.)

"Foot Bridge"

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"Bridges for wheeled military traffic should have a width of 8 feet in the clear at least. The normal width is 9 feet." "A bridge which will carry infantry in fours crowded at a check will carry most of the ordinary wagons that accompany an army in the field."

Other Conventional Signs.—The conventional signs used to represent a church with a tower, a church with a steeple, a church without a tower or a steeple, a windmill and a wind-pump should be carefully observed. These are usually prominent objects in a landscape, and of great assistance in setting a map, or determining one's position, as will be more fully explained later. Roman antiquities are indicated by names printed in block letters; British and Celtic antiquities by early English type.

(To be continued.)